

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

Adopted by the Board of Management St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh, June 2005

This policy is informed by the school's Mission Statement which aims to provide opportunities for students to benefit from teaching and learning which leads to good academic achievement.

## 1. Rationale

- a. To comply with the Education Welfare Act 2000
- b. To maintain accurate records of school attendance by student
- c. To form habits of regular and punctual attendance in students
- d. To discourage absenteeism, lateness and unwarranted withdrawal of students during the school day or school term
- e. To develop a sense of personal responsibility in students
- f. To make students aware that a good school attendance record enhances employment opportunities

## 2. Goals

- Attendance by all students for the full school year
- Attendance by all students for each full school day
- Minimum rate of absenteeism
- The early detection and correction of patterns of poor attendance
- Accurate recording of students' attendance

## 3. Content

- Attendance records for all students will be maintained by the School as set out in this Policy.
- Teachers and management will encourage regular attendance by students.
- The School Newsletter, meetings with parents and other occasions will be used to communicate to parents the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of unwarranted absences.
- Teachers will discuss attendance records of students with parents/guardians during the course of Parent/Teacher meetings.
- Where unauthorised absences are suspected parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.
- The Home/School Liaison Officer will encourage and facilitate regular attendance by children from families with special difficulties or needs.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### Principal

- To ensure that adequate systems are in place to record attendances and absences of students
- To monitor attendance records regularly
- To make reports to the Education Welfare Officer as required by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- To inform parents/guardians and students of procedures for the notification of absences withdrawal of students from the School
- To remind students and parents/guardians of the importance of regular attendance and the negative impact of frequent absences on student progress

### Deputy Principal

- To encourage regular attendance by students
- To receive reports from Year Heads on issues relating to attendance
- To monitor and investigate unauthorised absences of students from the School or from classes
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences are suspected

### Year Heads

- To monitor student attendance regularly
- To seek and file written explanations for student absences from parents/guardians
- To note trends in absence records of individual students e.g. Monday or Friday absences and to bring this to the attention of the parents/guardians of the students concerned
- To send standard Absence Letters to parents/guardians where frequent absences occur
- To contact parents/guardians where unauthorised absences occur or are suspected and to notify the Deputy Principal of same

### Teachers

- To take a roll call in every class
- To notify the Administration Office of absences from Class 1 and Class 7 each day on the school's Absence slip
- To discuss students' attendance records with parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher Meetings
- To impress on students the importance of regular attendance and ensure they understand their responsibility to find to 'catch up' on work missed during their absence

### Registration Teachers

- To conduct a daily roll call
- To receive 'Absence Letters' signed by parents/guardians from students who have been absent and to deposit these letters in the box provided for the purpose in the staff room after registration period each day. Absence Letters will then be filed by Year Heads.
- To keep a record of matters relating to attendance/absences of students e.g. failure to provide Absence Letter from parents/guardians.
- To liaise with Year Heads on matters relating to attendance records of students.
- To notify the teacher in charge of lunch-time detention of students being referred for detention and to check that such students have attended detention period assigned to them.

## Parents

- To ensure regular attendance of students and avoid unwarranted absences
- To notify the School in writing of the reason for all student absences: such notice should be provided prior to the absence if possible or otherwise immediately afterwards. Telephone or oral messages relating to student absences must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible. (The school reserves the right not to permit students returning from an absence to attend class until a written explanation is furnished as described above)
- To provide to the School reliable contact telephone numbers and alternative 'emergency' numbers so that the School may contact parents/guardians or other authorised parties if necessary
- To adhere to the procedures set out in this Policy for the withdrawal of students from School during the school day
- To acknowledge and, where necessary reply to communications from the School in relation to attendance issues

## Administration Office

- To record absences notified to the office by teachers at Class 1 and Class 7 each day
- To post, twice daily, a list of student absences on the Staff Room notice board for the attention of teachers
- To maintain a record of students withdrawn from school during the school day and their return to the school
- To ensure that when a student is withdrawn from the school, a parent/guardian personally accompanies the student who is leaving the school and signs the appropriate record before the student is withdrawn.

## 5. Attendance Records

Teachers will conduct a roll call in each class.

At Classes 1 and 7 a list of absences will be sent to the office from which a full list of absences will be compiled by the office staff: this list of absences will be posted, twice daily, on the staff room notice board.

An official roll call will be conducted at Daily Registration period each day. The teacher in charge of Daily Registration will maintain a record of student absences and record the number of absences on students' end-of-term Report Forms to parents.

Letters from parents/guardians regarding student absences will be given by students to the teacher in charge of Daily Registration immediately on the student's return to School. These letters will be deposited in the box provided for the purpose in the staff room at the end of registration period each day.

Parents/Guardians are required to give advance notice in writing of all foreseen absences giving a reason for the absence.

Where an absence is unforeseen, the parent/guardian is required to notify the School by telephone on the

morning of the absence. This notification must be confirmed by a written letter stating a reason for and duration of the absence.

Where a student is to be withdrawn from the School during the school day, the student must present a written request from the parent/guardian to the Deputy Principal before Class 1. This notice will be presented to the office when the student leaves the school.

Parents/Guardians or a person nominated by the parents/guardians on the student's Registration Form, must present themselves at the School and sign the office Attendance Register when a student is withdrawn from the School during the school day.

On returning to the school after an absence for part of a school day the student must again sign the office Attendance Register.

Failure to comply with any of the above procedures for leaving the School during school hours is a serious breach of the School's code of Conduct.

The School reserves the right not to permit students returning from an absence to attend class until a written explanation is furnished as described above.

## 6. Strategies to Encourage School Attendance

Informing and reminding students and parents of the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 in relation to attendance.

Informing parents through circulars, newsletters and meetings, of the negative impact of absenteeism on the students' education.

Encouragement of full attendance by students particularly on days prior to school breaks.

Homework Club: providing supervised facilities for homework for local primary and second-level students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This programme is delivered by a qualified teacher assisted by Transition Year students in the School.

Twice daily roll calls.

Early identification of poor attendance patterns and notification of same to parents.

## 7. Monitoring

The Principal will liaise with the Deputy Principal and Year Heads in monitoring the implementation of the policy.

## 8. Review and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed annually by the whole staff.